

### What are they?

The South Dakota Common Core Standards provide a clear and rigorous set of expectations for what students (grades K-12) should know and be able to do in the subject areas of English-language arts and math.

The standards are:

- Research-based and aligned to expectations for college and career success
- Informed by the best models in the country
- Benchmarked to top-performing nations across the world
- Developed by teachers, principals, education experts and parents; not politicians

### How are they different from previous standards?

South Dakota has had standards in various subject areas, including English-language arts and math, for many years.

In November 2010, the South Dakota Board of Education adopted updated standards in English-language arts and math (the Common Core).

The standards promote:

- Deeper understanding of the key concepts students need to succeed as independent thinkers
- Students' ability to apply knowledge to real-world situations
- Instruction that places more emphasis on understanding and application, as opposed to memorization and test-taking
- Richer, more authentic types of assessment

### Why do we need them?

Growing global competition makes it critical that students graduate high school ready for the challenges of college and careers in today's knowledge-based economy.

The new standards are aligned with college and workforce expectations and establish clear expectations for students, including the ability to:

- Apply math in real-world situations
- Read and analyze both literature and informational text
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
- Solve problems
- Communicate effectively

Through this solid mastery of skills, the standards will fuel an even stronger workforce for the state.

The standards are internationally benchmarked, which means South Dakota students should be better prepared to compete for jobs with students from around the world.

Because 45 states have adopted these common standards, there will be consistency from state to state, which is important in today's highly mobile society. A fraction is a fraction whether you are in South Dakota or South Carolina.

### **How were they developed?**

The effort to develop common standards among the states was led by the governors and chief education leaders in the 45 participating states.

These two groups pulled together teachers, administrators, education experts, researchers and parents to reflect the best current thinking in education, the realities of the classroom, and aspirations for children.

The federal government did not play a role in the development of the standards.

As with any adoption of academic standards in South Dakota, the new standards in English-language arts and math were brought before the state Board of Education for review and approval. The board voted to adopt the standards in November 2010.

As with any academic standards in South Dakota, local districts determine how to teach and implement the standards – selecting their own curricula, instructional practices and materials.

### **America's business leaders support Common Core standards**

"These standards will better prepare students for college and the workplace, something of critical importance to the nation's employers. The changes now under way in America's schools hold great promise for creating a more highly skilled workforce that is better equipped to meet the needs of local, state and national economies."

Open letter, New York Times, Feb. 12, 2013  
Signed by 73 leading businesses across the U.S.